

PRAISE FOR BARBARA DELINSKY

ESCAPE

"Delinsky nails it in her trademark latest...  
captivating and moving...rich characterizations and real-feeling  
dilemmas that will keep readers hooked."

—Publishers Weekly

NOT MY DAUGHTER

"A topical tale the resonates with timeless emotion."

— People \*\*\*½

"Delinsky proves once again why she's a perennial bestseller with  
this thought-provoking tale...Timely, fresh, and true-to-life."

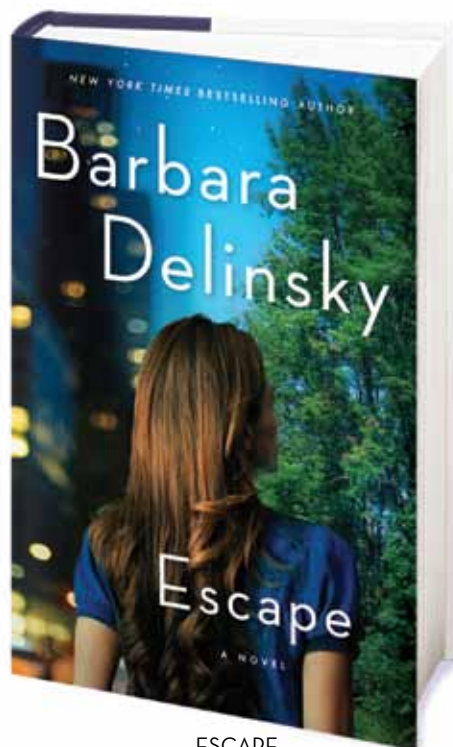
—Publishers Weekly

Barbara Delinsky is a *New York Times* bestselling author with more than thirty million copies of her books in print. She lives with her family in New England.



VISIT BARBARA ONLINE:

Web: [www.BarbaraDelsinsky.com](http://www.BarbaraDelsinsky.com)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/BDelinsky](http://www.facebook.com/BDelinsky)  
Twitter: [twitter.com/BarbaraDelinsky](http://twitter.com/BarbaraDelinsky)



ESCAPE  
A Novel by  
Barbara Delinsky  
ISBN: 978-0-385-53272-3 • Hardcover  
On sale: July 5, 2010

**READING GROUPS:** If your group is reading *ESCAPE* and would like to be considered for a visit from Barbara Delinsky, either in person or by phone, please e-mail contact information and a description of your reading group to [DelinskyReadingGroups@randomhouse.com](mailto:DelinskyReadingGroups@randomhouse.com). (Expires 12/31/2011)

For free supplementary materials, including information on book groups, suggestions for further reading, chances to win books, phone-in author appearances, and much more, e-mail [DoubledayReads@RandomHouse.com](mailto:DoubledayReads@RandomHouse.com).

Other Reading Group Companions are available at [www.randomhouse.com/doubleday/readers](http://www.randomhouse.com/doubleday/readers)

ESCAPE Reading Group Companion, Copyright 2011 by the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, A Division of Random House, Inc.

[www.barbaradelinsky.com](http://www.barbaradelinsky.com)  
[www.doubleday.com](http://www.doubleday.com)

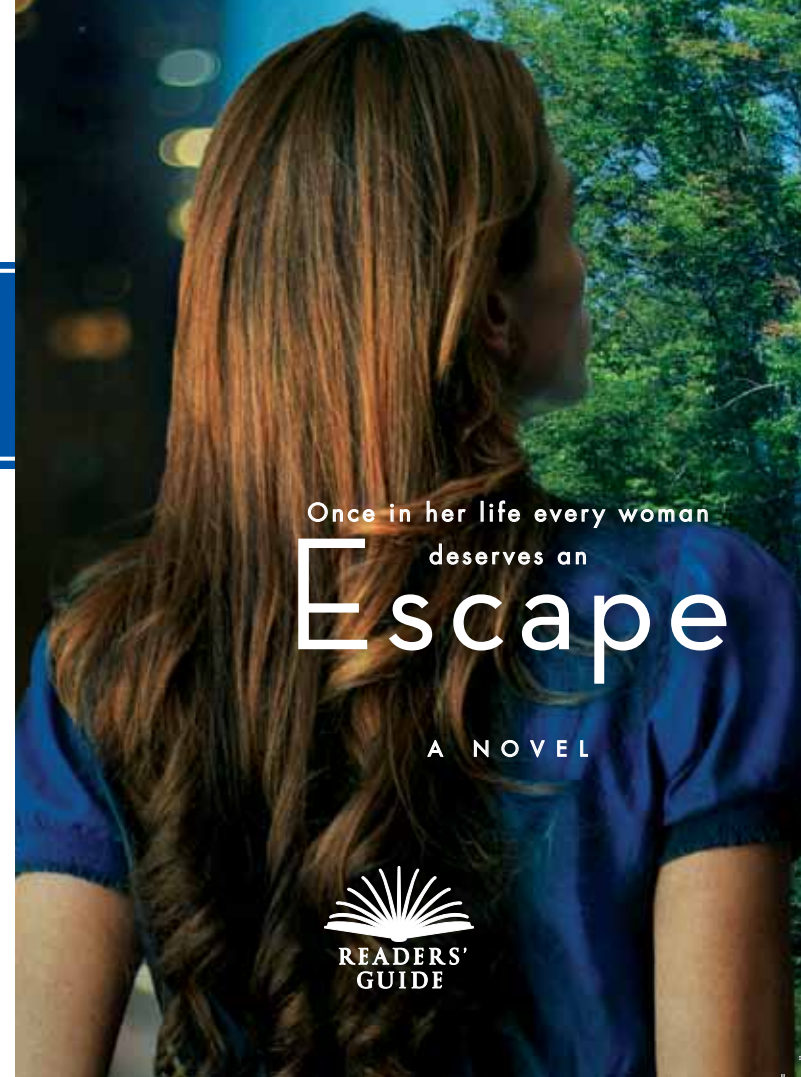
Questions? Comments? Needs? E-mail Doubleday at [doubledaymarketing@randomhouse.com](mailto:doubledaymarketing@randomhouse.com)



DOUBLEDAY • 1745 BROADWAY • NEW YORK, NY 10019

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

# Barbara Delinsky



Once in her life every woman  
deserves an  
**Escape**

A NOVEL



## INTRODUCTION

*Have you ever woken up in a cold sweat thinking you're stuck in a life you don't want? Did you ever consider disappearing – leaving family, friends, even a spouse—ditching everything you've ever known and starting over again? Maybe, just maybe, even returning to an old lover?*

**That's how Emily Aulenbach begins the story of her escape:** escape from a workaholic husband she rarely sees, an overpriced New York City apartment that never feels like home, a job where profits, not people, are the priority. She doesn't plan her escape; she just walks out of her cubicle, gets behind the wheel of her husband's BMW, shuts off her BlackBerry, and drives away.

The one thing she can't escape is her past. Lately she's been getting letters from Jude, the fiercely independent man she loved in college. She thought they were soul mates, until she caught him cheating on her. Now she finds herself heading north, toward the New Hampshire town where she and Jude fell in love a decade ago. She doesn't care if she's making another wrong turn. She just knows she needs a new destination.

Raising powerful questions about the paths we take in life, *Escape* will give your book club much to discuss. We hope this guide will enhance your experience of Emily's inspiring tale.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. High salaries help Emily and James tolerate their jobs for a while. How did you react when Emily's father stressed the importance of being practical and earning a good wage? In your own life, how do you balance financial needs with the quest for a meaningful life?
2. What do you think Jude really wanted from Emily when he began writing letters to her? Why wasn't he able to commit to her earlier? Would you have been more attracted to Jude or James?
3. Discuss the way the novel addresses the theme of parenting. In her quest for a child, how does Emily's perception of motherhood change? Why is it difficult for Jude to know how to enter his child's life? Are there right and wrong reasons for wanting to become a parent?
4. What did Emily's parents teach her about marriage? How do Emily's roles as a daughter and sister compare to your roles in your family?
5. As an innkeeper, Vicki has a completely different livelihood from Emily's. Despite their wounded friendship, what does Vicki help Emily discover about home and a truly comfortable life?
6. How do Emily's feelings about Jude change throughout the novel? Was she being honest when she told people she did not come back just for him?
7. Healing gradually takes place for many of the characters in *Escape*. As Emily immerses herself in the animal shelter and in Lee's dramatic case, what does she discover about her own healing process? Besides legal counsel, what did Lee need in order to heal?
8. In chapter sixteen, we see a comparison between Emily and Jude: she was to her father what Jude was to Amelia, a child rejecting a parent's dream. What is the best way to discern the best course for our lives? Have you ever had to shed someone else's plans for you?
9. Emily reaches a tipping point when James cancels on her for an important business dinner but expects her to attend his. How would you have reacted if you had been Emily, or James? At its heart, is *Escape* also about a war between the sexes?
10. When Emily flees New York, she flees her routine with James as well and creates a new balance of power. What does their story tell us about the keys to a happy marriage?
11. What does the coyote signify to Emily? How does its message shift?
12. Both James and Jude experience major turning points near the end of the novel. When James's faith in his law firm is shaken, and Jude makes missteps that keep him from being a hero, what sort of men do they become?
13. How does Emily cope with the harsh judgment she received in Bell Valley? What are the pros and cons of her two worlds: Bell Valley versus Manhattan?
14. Barbara Delinsky thanks her fans for providing their ideal escapes in response to a question she posed on Facebook. How would you have responded? Where would you go if you wanted to just pick up one day and disappear?
15. Delinsky is a master at delivering realistic portrayals of ordinary people in extraordinary life dilemmas. How does Emily's situation compare to another favorite Delinsky novel you've read?